

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Page 1, after line 3, please insert as follows:

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

Page 2, after line 6, please insert as follows:

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

Page 2, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 8 to read as follows:

In WO-A-96/237757/96/23757 which is directed to the preparation of iridium carboxylates and their use in *inter alia* carbonylation reactions, the use of promoters not being mentioned, it is stated in contrast to WO-A-95/314326 that alkaline or alkaline earth ions are preferably eliminated, since their presence may have a harmful influence on the kinetics and selectivity of subsequent reactions in which the iridium carboxylate will be used as a catalyst.

Page 11, after line 21, please insert as follows:

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**